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NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE AND FEE(S) DUE

9629 7590 05/28/2008
MORGAN LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP
1111 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20004

EXAMINER	
PERT, EVAN T	
ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER

2826
DATE MAILED: 05/28/2008

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/569,794	09/22/2006	Nobuyuki Yamada	040894-7414	6628

TITLE OF INVENTION: PHOTOELECTRIC CONVERSION APPARATUS WITH CIRCUITRY TO OFFSET DARK NOISE

APPLN. TYPE	SMALL ENTITY	ISSUE FEE DUE	PUBLICATION FEE DUE	PREV. PAID ISSUE FEE	TOTAL FEE(S) DUE	DATE DUE
nonprovisional	NO	\$1440	\$300	\$0	\$1740	08/28/2008

THE APPLICATION IDENTIFIED ABOVE HAS BEEN EXAMINED AND IS ALLOWED FOR ISSUANCE AS A PATENT. **PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS CLOSED.** THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS. THIS APPLICATION IS SUBJECT TO WITHDRAWAL FROM ISSUE AT THE INITIATIVE OF THE OFFICE OR UPON PETITION BY THE APPLICANT. SEE 37 CFR 1.313 AND MPEP 1308.

THE ISSUE FEE AND PUBLICATION FEE (IF REQUIRED) MUST BE PAID WITHIN **THREE MONTHS FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS NOTICE** OR THIS APPLICATION SHALL BE REGARDED AS ABANDONED. **THIS STATUTORY PERIOD CANNOT BE EXTENDED.** SEE 35 U.S.C. 151. THE ISSUE FEE DUE INDICATED ABOVE DOES NOT REFLECT A CREDIT FOR ANY PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE IN THIS APPLICATION. IF AN ISSUE FEE HAS PREVIOUSLY BEEN PAID IN THIS APPLICATION (AS SHOWN ABOVE), THE RETURN OF PART B OF THIS FORM WILL BE CONSIDERED A REQUEST TO REAPPLY THE PREVIOUSLY PAID ISSUE FEE TOWARD THE ISSUE FEE NOW DUE.

HOW TO REPLY TO THIS NOTICE:

I. Review the SMALL ENTITY status shown above.

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as YES, verify your current SMALL ENTITY status:

A. If the status is the same, pay the TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above.

B. If the status above is to be removed, check box 5b on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and twice the amount of the ISSUE FEE shown above, or

If the SMALL ENTITY is shown as NO:

A. Pay TOTAL FEE(S) DUE shown above, or

B. If applicant claimed SMALL ENTITY status before, or is now claiming SMALL ENTITY status, check box 5a on Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal and pay the PUBLICATION FEE (if required) and 1/2 the ISSUE FEE shown above.

II. PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL, or its equivalent, must be completed and returned to the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) with your ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). If you are charging the fee(s) to your deposit account, section "4b" of Part B - Fee(s) Transmittal should be completed and an extra copy of the form should be submitted. If an equivalent of Part B is filed, a request to reapply a previously paid issue fee must be clearly made, and delays in processing may occur due to the difficulty in recognizing the paper as an equivalent of Part B.

III. All communications regarding this application must give the application number. Please direct all communications prior to issuance to Mail Stop ISSUE FEE unless advised to the contrary.

IMPORTANT REMINDER: Utility patents issuing on applications filed on or after Dec. 12, 1980 may require payment of maintenance fees. It is patentee's responsibility to ensure timely payment of maintenance fees when due.

PART B - FEE(S) TRANSMITTAL

Complete and send this form, together with applicable fee(s), to: **Mail** **Mail Stop ISSUE FEE**
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INSTRUCTIONS: This form should be used for transmitting the ISSUE FEE and PUBLICATION FEE (if required). Blocks 1 through 5 should be completed where appropriate. All further correspondence including the Patent, advance orders and notification of maintenance fees will be mailed to the current correspondence address as indicated unless corrected below or directed otherwise in Block 1, by (a) specifying a new correspondence address; and/or (b) indicating a separate "FEE ADDRESS" for maintenance fee notifications.

CURRENT CORRESPONDENCE ADDRESS (Note: Use Block 1 for any change of address)

Note: A certificate of mailing can only be used for domestic mailings of the Fee(s) Transmittal. This certificate cannot be used for any other accompanying papers. Each additional paper, such as an assignment or formal drawing, must have its own certificate of mailing or transmission.

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Certificate of Mailing or Transmission

I hereby certify that this Fee(s) Transmittal is being deposited with the United States Postal Service with sufficient postage for first class mail in an envelope addressed to the Mail Stop ISSUE FEE address above, or being facsimile transmitted to the USPTO (571) 273-2885, on the date indicated below.

(Depositor's name)
(Signature)
(Date)

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10/569,794	09/22/2006	Nobuyuki Yamada	040894-7414	6628

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nonprovisional	NO	\$1440	\$300	\$0	\$1740	08/28/2008

EXAMINER	ART UNIT	CLASS-SUBCLASS
PERT, EVAN T	2826	348-243000

1. Change of correspondence address or indication of "Fee Address" (37 CFR 1.363).

- ☐ Change of correspondence address (or Change of Correspondence Address form PTO/SB/122) attached.
☐ "Fee Address" indication (or "Fee Address" Indication form PTO/SB/47; Rev 03-02 or more recent) attached. Use of a **Customer Number is required.**

2. For printing on the patent front page, list

- (1) the names of up to 3 registered patent attorneys or agents OR, alternatively, 1 _____
 (2) the name of a single firm (having as a member a registered attorney or agent) and the names of up to 2 registered patent attorneys or agents. If no name is listed, no name will be printed. 2 _____
 3 _____

3. ASSIGNEE NAME AND RESIDENCE DATA TO BE PRINTED ON THE PATENT (print or type)

PLEASE NOTE: Unless an assignee is identified below, no assignee data will appear on the patent. If an assignee is identified below, the document has been filed for recordation as set forth in 37 CFR 3.11. Completion of this form is NOT a substitute for filing an assignment.

(A) NAME OF ASSIGNEE

(B) RESIDENCE: (CITY and STATE OR COUNTRY)

Please check the appropriate assignee category or categories (will not be printed on the patent): ☐ Individual ☐ Corporation or other private group entity ☐ Government

4a. The following fee(s) are submitted:

- ☐ Issue Fee
☐ Publication Fee (No small entity discount permitted)
☐ Advance Order - # of Copies _____

4b. Payment of Fee(s): (Please first reapply any previously paid issue fee shown above)

- ☐ A check is enclosed.
☐ Payment by credit card. Form PTO-2038 is attached.
☐ The Director is hereby authorized to charge the required fee(s), any deficiency, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account Number _____ (enclose an extra copy of this form).

5. **Change in Entity Status** (from status indicated above)

- ☐ a. Applicant claims SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27. ☐ b. Applicant is no longer claiming SMALL ENTITY status. See 37 CFR 1.27(g)(2).

NOTE: The Issue Fee and Publication Fee (if required) will not be accepted from anyone other than the applicant; a registered attorney or agent; or the assignee or other party in interest as shown by the records of the United States Patent and Trademark Office.

Authorized Signature _____ Date _____
 Typed or printed name _____ Registration No. _____

This collection of information is required by 37 CFR 1.311. The information is required to obtain or retain a benefit by the public which is to file (and by the USPTO to process) an application. Confidentiality is governed by 35 U.S.C. 122 and 37 CFR 1.14. This collection is estimated to take 12 minutes to complete, including gathering, preparing, and submitting the completed application form to the USPTO. Time will vary depending upon the individual case. Any comments on the amount of time you require to complete this form and/or suggestions for reducing this burden, should be sent to the Chief Information Officer, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, U.S. Department of Commerce, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450. **DO NOT SEND FEES OR COMPLETED FORMS TO THIS ADDRESS. SEND TO: Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450.**

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9629	7590	05/28/2008	EXAMINER	
MORGAN LEWIS & BOCKIUS LLP 1111 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE NW WASHINGTON, DC 20004			PERT, EVAN T	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER

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DATE MAILED: 05/28/2008

Determination of Patent Term Adjustment under 35 U.S.C. 154 (b) (application filed on or after May 29, 2000)

The Patent Term Adjustment to date is 188 day(s). If the issue fee is paid on the date that is three months after the mailing date of this notice and the patent issues on the Tuesday before the date that is 28 weeks (six and a half months) after the mailing date of this notice, the Patent Term Adjustment will be 188 day(s).

If a Continued Prosecution Application (CPA) was filed in the above-identified application, the filing date that determines Patent Term Adjustment is the filing date of the most recent CPA.

Applicant will be able to obtain more detailed information by accessing the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) WEB site (<http://pair.uspto.gov>).

Any questions regarding the Patent Term Extension or Adjustment determination should be directed to the Office of Patent Legal Administration at (571)-272-7702. Questions relating to issue and publication fee payments should be directed to the Customer Service Center of the Office of Patent Publication at 1-(888)-786-0101 or (571)-272-4200.

Notice of Allowability**Application No.**

10/569,794

Applicant(s)

YAMADA ET AL.

Examiner

EVAN PERT

Art Unit

2826

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to the application filed February 27, 2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-7.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: ____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date ____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☒ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date ____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date ____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☐ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other ____.

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The application has been amended as follows, to correct informalities:

Change the title to –Photoelectric Conversion Apparatus with Circuitry to Offset Dark Noise--.

At p. 2, line 6, change "is turned on" to –is turned on, and--.

At p. 2, line 7, change "103, and a noise" to –103, a noise--.

At p. 2, lines 13-14, change "so as to turn off a MOS transistor 105, thereby" to –while MOS transistor 105 is turned on; thereby--.

Allowable Subject Matter

2. Claims 1-7 are allowed.

3. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

Document "JP 10-145681" has been raised as being especially relevant to claims 1-7 by the Japanese Patent Office [see 371P (02/27/2006)], and as especially relevant only to claim 1 in a Chinese Office Action [NPL (09/24/2007)]; however, these findings do not apply under United States statutes of 35 USC 102 or 103:

The Japanese and Chinese Office Actions fail to address distinctive features of the invention claimed, not anticipated or obvious under US law:

Regarding claims 1, 2, 6 and 7, the prior art fails to disclose the limitation "at the same time by inverting the polarity of the first accumulating unit," which is exemplified by Fig. 1 with timing diagram 2; the polarity of the first accumulating unit (i.e. capacitor 6) is reversed (i.e. inversed) after it is charged with a signal representing dark noise voltage (i.e. selectively introduced by first switch unit 4). After the voltage polarity is inversed on capacitor 6, the total signal is read out by a fifth switch (e.g. transistor 10), as the total series voltage of capacitor 7 and capacitor 6.

Contrarily, in the JP 10-145681 reference, as described at [0040], and as seen in the electrical schematic of Drawing 5 taken with the timing diagram of Drawing 6, the voltage polarity of 1st and second accumulating units [i.e. capacitors 16 and 17] remains the same throughout the read cycle:

In the '681 reference, the difference of potentials on capacitors 16 and 17 "is performed in the CDS circuit 27, and the difference is taken" per [0040]. Polarity of each of capacitor 16 and 17 in the '681 reference remains the same and is never subjected to the "inversing" as is claimed in the instant case. In the instant invention, following applicant's Fig. 2, one can see that the circuit of Fig. 1 causes the polarity of capacitor 6 (i.e. "first accumulating unit") to be inversed so that when transistors 9 (i.e. third switch unit) and transistors 4 and 5 (i.e. first and second switch units) are off, and transistor 8 (i.e. "fourth switch unit") is on, the capacitors 6 and 7 (i.e. "first and second accumulating units") form a series circuit connected from transistor 10 (i.e. "fifth switch unit") to ground, such that "at the same time by inverting the polarity of the first accumulating unit" as claimed in claims 1 and 2, becomes practicably realized.

Regarding claims 3-7, the claimed invention can be distinguished from prior art, including the JP 10-145681 reference, by the claimed first (e.g. transistor 4), second (e.g. transistor 5), third (e.g. transistor 8), fourth (e.g. transistor 9) and fifth (e.g. transistor 10) switch units with their associated claimed functions, exemplified by Figs. 1 + 2 (first embodiment) and Fig. 4 (second embodiment, which is the first embodiment with transistor 9 separated into 9a, 9b and 9c for further isolating first accumulating unit 6 from second accumulating unit 7).

Notably, claims 4 and 5 have been questioned in the Chinese Office Action for supposed lack of written description of the "fifth switch" and its function, yet the fifth switch is clearly disclosed, exemplified as transistor 10 that receives signal RD for outputting the dark and light signals at the same time (i.e. 6 and 7 are in series and the voltages add together to eliminate the dark voltage noise component).

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

4. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.
5. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to EVAN PERT whose telephone number is (571)272-1969. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (7:30AM-3:30 PM).

Art Unit: 2826

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sue Purvis can be reached on 571-272-1236. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

ETP

May 15, 2008

/Evan Pert/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 2826